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December 14, 1948

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

CONTINUATION OF ENIWETOK DANGER AREA

Note by the Secretary

The General Manager has requested circulation of the attached memorandum from the Director of Military Application, which provides background information for Commission discussion scheduled for December 15, 1948.

ROY B. SNAPP

Secretary

REPOSITORY NARA/College Park
COLLECTION CG 326 46-51 Secretary
BOX No. 90 (NNS-326-93-007)
FOLDER 682 Eniwetok Atoll (12-1-47)

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC

Carl Wilson 3/22/84
REVIEWED BY DATE

H.R. Schmidt 7/1/85

By: W. Tench 4/14/86

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UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

December 14, 1948

TO: Carroll L. Wilson

FROM: Brig. General James McCormack, Jr.

SUBJECT: CONTINUATION OF ENIWETOK DANGER AREA

REFER TO
SYMBOL: MAW:JSR

Prior to the holding of weapon tests at Eniwetok in the Spring of 1948, a danger area was established embracing an area 200 nautical miles east and west and 150 nautical miles north and south, centered on Eniwetok. The area was established by the State Department notifying the chiefs of all foreign diplomatic missions and by the Atomic Energy Commission requesting the Chief of Naval Operations and the Air Coordinating Committee to notify mariners and airmen, and itself notifying the general public through the medium of a press release.

Since our current planning contemplates the re-use of Eniwetok as a proving ground, it is considered desirable from the standpoint of public relations and security to continue in force the danger area beyond its present date of expiration of December 31, 1948 until further notice. At the time of establishing the danger area for 1948, the State Department was not willing to extend the duration of the prescribed danger area beyond one calendar year. This limitation was desired by the State Department in order to avoid the international implication that the United States was restricting the free use of the high seas, and further because the State Department desired to avoid possible adverse international reactions. The State Department is now willing to concur in the indefinite extension in point of time of the danger area. Their willingness is based upon their desire not to invite the attention of all nations annually to the fact that we are using Eniwetok as an atomic weapon proving ground and also upon the fact that no adverse international reaction was experienced as a result of last year's announcement of the danger area. The Military Liaison Committee has indicated that the National Military Establishment concurs in the continuance of the danger area for an indefinite period.

The indefinite extension of the danger area is concurred in by the Public and Technical Information Service and the Office of the General Counsel.

It is requested that the Director of the Division of Military Application be authorized to proceed with effecting those notifications necessary to the continuance of an Eniwetok danger area beyond December 31, 1948 for an indefinite time in the future.

[REDACTED]